IN THE CLAIMS:

1-27 (cancelled).

28 (previously presented). A method of manufacturing a heat resistant product, the method comprising:

(i) coating vermiculite granules with a ceramic binder, and curing/drying the binder to form precoated vermiculite granules; and

(ii) coating the precoated vermiculite granules with a ceramic binder, and curing/drying the binder,

wherein between 35% and 95% of the dry weight of the product is vermiculite having a particle size such that more than 60% of the vermiculite does not pass through a 1mm sieve.

29 (previously presented). A method according to claim 28, wherein the curing/drying steps comprise heating or vacuum drying.

30 (previously presented). A method according to claim 28, wherein the mixture of precoated vermiculite granules and binder is held in a mould or press during curing/drying in step (ii).

31 (previously presented). A method according to claim 28, wherein the mixture

of precoated vermiculite granules and binder is coated onto a surface of an article prior to the curing/drying step.

32 (previously presented). A method according to claim 28, wherein 50%-90% of the dry weight of the product is vermiculite having a particle size such that more than 60% of the vermiculite does not pass through a 1mm sieve.

33 (previously presented). A method according to claim 29, wherein 50%-90% of the dry weight of the product is vermiculite having a particle size such that more than 60% of the vermiculite does not pass through a 1mm sieve.

34 (previously presented). A method according to claim 28, wherein the vermiculite has a particle size such that more than 80% of the vermiculite does not pass through a 2mm sieve.

35 (previously presented). A method according to claim 29, wherein the vermiculite has a particle size such that more than 80% of the vermiculite does not pass through a 2mm sieve.

36 (currently amended). A method according to claim 28, wherein the binder comprises ~~the~~ an adhesive part of a two part binder.

37 (currently amended). A method according to claim 29, wherein the binder comprises ~~the~~ an adhesive part of a two part binder.

38 (currently amended). A method according to claim 28, wherein the binder comprises ~~the~~ an adhesive part of a two part binder, mixed with powdered vermiculite.

39 (currently amended). A method according to claim 29, wherein the binder comprises ~~the~~ an adhesive part of a two part binder, mixed with powdered vermiculite.

40 (previously presented). A method according to claim 28, wherein the vermiculite granules have a maximum dimension up to 15mm.

41 (previously preseented). A method according to claim 29, wherein the vermiculite granules have a maximum dimension up to 15mm.

42 (currently amended). A heat resistant product ~~obtainable~~ obtained by a method according to claim 28.

43 (previously presented). A product according to claim 42, wherein the product is substantially rigid.

44 (previously presented). A product according to claim 42, further comprising glass fibre or other fibrous material reinforcement.

45 (previously presented). A product according to claim 42, which comprises voids which include trapped air.

46 (previously presented). A product according to claim 42, wherein the product is sandwiched between load supporting sheets adhered to the product.

47 (previously presented). A product according to claim 42, adhered onto the surface of an article.

48 (previously presented). A product according to claim 42, moulded onto the surface of an article.

49 (currently amended). A product according to claim 42, sprayed onto the surface of ~~the~~ an article.

50 (currently amended). A product according to claim ~~42~~ 47, wherein the article comprises a honeycomb structure.

51 (previously amended). A product according to claim 50, further comprising a phenolic glass laminate sandwiched between the honeycomb structure and the product.

52 (previously presented). A fire wall comprising a heat resistant product according to claim 42.